





## JORDAN TIMES

Responsible Editor:  
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**MAHMOUD AL KAYED**  
Advertising Manager:  
**FERNANDO FRANCIS**

Editorial and advertising offices:

**JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION**  
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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# Pension Fund may take on new role as Jordan Investment Corporation

By Rami G. Khouri  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN—A new vehicle to channel government money into productive investments within Jordan may be created soon if the government accepts a proposal to transform the existing Pension Fund into an institution to be called the Jordan Investment Corporation.

Pension Fund Managing Director Basil Jardaneh told the Jordan Times in an interview here this week that he expects a decision by the government within the next six months at the latest. The matter has to be discussed and approved by the Cabinet and the National Consultative Council.

The Pension Fund started work in 1977 with two aims: to meet obligations to pensioners as set by the government, and to invest funds "in a manner that serves the general economic development of the country."

But, Mr. Jardaneh points out, the fund carries out its investment function far better than its pension obligations, because it does not have the financial resources to pay all pension benefits under the government's present scheme.

There are some 30,000 pensioners now eligible for retirement benefits under the fund's supervision, most of whom are retired armed forces personnel. The fund, however, is supposed to pay benefits to all eligible pensioners, which includes the armed forces and all government employees in classified jobs whose salaries are paid out of the central government budget.

But the law establishing the Pension Fund dictated that five per cent of an employee's salary be withheld every month to fund the pension scheme; this is calculated from the basic salary, not the effective salary, which can be significantly higher when special allowances are added to the basic salary.

The net result is that the fund's obligations are far above its resources. For the current year, Mr. Jardaneh said, obligations to pensioners will total some JD 14 million, of which only JD 4 million will come from the Pension Fund itself. The gap will be made up by the central government, as it has been for the two years that the

fund has been in operation. "We are not a fully funded pension scheme," Mr. Jardaneh said, "and unless the law is changed to make us a fully funded operation, I think it is unwise to maintain the Pension Fund in its present state because it cannot pay the pension benefits that it is supposed to pay."

The proposal to the government suggests that the fund be transformed into the Jordan Investment Corporation to undertake investment activity in all sectors of the economy, with the pension scheme being turned over to the Finance Ministry, which in any case now already handles the mechanical aspects of bookkeeping and making the pension payments.

The fund's pension obligations are increasing steadily, rising from JD 8.8 million in 1977 to JD 12.8 million last year and the estimated JD 14 million this year.

The profits from the fund's investment activity are ploughed into the pension payments, but even with the rising income from investments, the pension obligations will grow faster than the fund's income, and thus there will always be a large gap between the fund's obligations and resources.

The Pension Fund generated JD 980,000 in profits from its various investments last year, and Mr. Jardaneh expects this to rise to about JD 1.2 million this year.

The fund started this year with JD 21.5 million in capital assets, of which JD 17 million is committed to its investments. About 60 per cent of investments are in the country's industrial sector, in the form of shares of companies, while the remaining 40 per cent is invested in such sectors as tourism, banking and financial institutions and real estate.

Because most of the projects in which the fund invests (such as the Aqaba fertiliser plant) have a gestation period of up to four years before they start producing, and paying profits, the fund anticipates a slow growth in its investment income during these years, with a sharp rise in income expected after another three years or so.

If it does change its status into an "investment" corporation, the fund would still donate its inv-

estment profits to pay pensioners' obligations, Mr. Jardaneh said, but it could then concentrate on what it seems to do best—identify investment opportunities, particularly in the industrial sector, and promote them by carrying out feasibility studies and getting together investors from Jordan and abroad.

Among the new schemes that it is now actively studying or helping to set up are plants to produce

underwriting activity within the country in promoting the trading of shares and bonds, Mr. Jardaneh said.

It would depend on the Central Bank, acting on behalf of the central government, for its funds, as it does now. The Pension Fund started operations in 1976 with a capital of JD 15.5 million, which the Central Bank raised from revealing its gold reserves from the old level of \$35 per ounce to a

higher level of \$100 per ounce. In the past two years, the Central Bank has turned over JD 3 million annually to the Pension Fund, which has similarly been raised from income from the Central Bank's foreign exchange earnings and overvaluation of its foreign assets, primarily gold.

This arrangement would probably continue, Mr. Jardaneh said, thereby precluding the need for the fund to raise its own investment capital by borrowing.

One of the major functions of the Pension Fund that has eme-

establishing their production outside Amman—is a post but a more likely approach is to establish a fund under the Industrial Development Corporation to provide soft loans for locating in remote regions. This is very important distribution of income more evenly spread than the country.

The Pension Fund is an enormous body which is run by its own board of directors, including as members the Governor of the Bank and the President of the Planning Council, among others. While the law establishing the fund stipulates in general the manner in which it is to invest its funds, Mr. Jardaneh says that "it is, in fact, law, and we have quite a hand in deciding investments."

This is reflected in a range of the fund's investments which also include the commercial centre being built immediately below the Jor-continental Hotel, a what is to be the country's largest-scale department store which will include 3,000 sqm of sales space in a new area outside the Amman region, such as the two new glass plants in Ma'an.

The first three years of a project's life are the critical ones," Mr. Jardaneh says, "and it is in this phase of an operation that we want to study how the government incentives scheme can best help new companies. A plan to provide outright subsidies to companies

which is investing and set up.

## No change

IS ISRAEL contemplating treating with the Palestine Liberation Organisation?

Much speculation about such an extraordinary prospect has been aroused by Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan's statement the other day that "the PLO...is not a state but we cannot deny their position or their value in the conflict and eventually in order to reach an agreement."

Despite a tendency for awkward English syntax, Mr. Dayan has a reputation for meaning what he says, and often for carefully calculating the potential impact of his remarks. It was for that reason that his statement this week was seen by many as some sort of signal that Israel might be coming to terms with the idea of dealing directly with the PLO in the context of Middle East peace negotiations.

But if the Dayan speech was a trial balloon, it has since been well and truly shot down. In Hebrew reports of the speech, Israeli media took pains to separate the two parts of the key sentence, to dissociate the bit about the PLO's role in the conflict with the bit about efforts to reach an agreement. Prime Minister Menachem Begin rushed in to pour cold water on the significance of the remarks. And Mr. Dayan has since issued a clarification, saying that his intention was merely to underline "the position of the PLO in the conflict and its influence on the Arab states." "My analysis," he went on to say, "does not mean that we should sit with the PLO in any negotiation... (or) accept the PLO as a partner for discussion."

So much for that. But in the storm that followed the initial remarks, some Arab leaders in the occupied West Bank took heart from Mr. Dayan's approach. And the PLO's own reaction—while failing, correctly, to see any shift in Israeli policy—did nothing to encourage or discourage the concept of a dialogue with Israel.

And it is this, we feel, that is instructive. It is the Palestinians who are perpetually accused of being hardliners, of spurning all offers of negotiations, of being the sticking point in any moves towards peace. In the past year, the world has learnt—or has had the opportunity to learn—differently. While Israel has stalled at every step along the way in the Camp David negotiations, the broad Arab consensus for peace endorsed at Baghdad, the PLO overtures on the issue of a dialogue with the United States, and the efforts by Jordan and other influential parties to regain the peace momentum on the basis of Resolution 242, have all been resolutely ignored.

Israel is about to go into another round of Camp David talks with Egypt. Its rejectionist line on "linkage" of a peace treaty with the Palestinian question remains as hard as ever (and significantly, when Mr. Dayan appeared to yield a little on that point in a previous round of talks with Egypt, he was firmly yanked back into line by Mr. Begin). So the moral of this latest story seems to be not to pay any attention to Israeli trial balloons—even (or perhaps especially) when they are flown by the wily Mr. Dayan. We have been fooled before and we will be fooled again.

## ARAB PRESS COMMENTARY

In a bitter attack on Egyptian acting Foreign Minister Butros Ghali, AL RA'I newspaper Friday says the man is the remaining pawn of a batch of presidential aides in Egypt to survive a series of purges and seems still enjoying the confidence of his master (President Sadat).

Encouraged by his unique position, the paper writes, Mr. Ghali is intent on pleasing his master and serving his aims and those of Israel as well.

It says this is a painful truth about Ghali who demonstrated his scandalous behaviour at his press conference in Belgium last Wednesday. Dr. Ghali did not only assure newsmen then that the Israeli-Egyptian separate peace treaty will be signed soon but went on to make further concessions at the expense of Palestine and Egypt, the paper says.

In his statement, the paper points out, the Egyptian minister stressed that Egypt will not join the other Arab states in a future war with Israel, echoing his master's slogan, no war after October (of 1973); and in a direct challenge of Arab resolutions, he said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is not the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

He also told the newsmen that Egypt was committed to selling oil to Israel and admitted that he himself held talks with his Spanish counterpart on the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and Spain, the paper adds.

In conclusion the paper wonders who could have rendered a better service to Israel, Israeli successive leaders or Sadat?

Under the heading "A Brave Stand by President d'Estaing" AL DUSTOUR newspaper lauds the French leader for his call for a comprehensive Middle East peace to be acceptable to all parties in the region and for his warning that the current prolonged attempts for achieving a separate peace between Israel and Egypt will be futile and might have adverse effects on the whole issue.

The statement is the most significant one yet by the French president with regard to the Middle East question since the start of the Camp David serial and demonstrates the identical views of France and the majority of Arab states in the sense that the Camp David agreements are not instrumental in bringing about a comprehensive peace; it also illustrates France's refusal to see Washington handling the affair in such a way as to lead to a settlement that will not enjoy the support of the international community, the paper writes.

It says the French stand is the strongest yet among Western European nations and it is hoped other countries will follow suit.

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## Conference approves plan for developing Arab culture

AMMAN, Feb. 16 (JNA)—Minister of Culture and Youth Sharif Fawwaz Sharaf today returned home after participating in the meetings of the second Conference of Arab Ministers of Culture which was held in Tripoli, Libya, on Feb. 10.

Sharif Sharaf said that the conference approved a number of recommendations which were included on the agenda. The conferees approved a comprehensive plan for the development of Arab culture, a draft agreement for protecting copyrights, a project for issuing an Arabic encyclopedia on studies and research, and the restoration of Arab antiquities that were taken outside of the Arab World.

The conferees also reviewed plans drawn up by the Arab Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation to celebrate the advent of the 15th

century by the Muslim calendar, he added. Sharif Sharaf chaired the first working session of the conference and explained then that the purpose of conference was held to boost Arab culture.

## Council of Arab

## Economic Unity

## official ends

## talks in Jordan

AMMAN, Feb. 16 (JNA)—Secretary-General of the Council of Arab Economic Unity Fakhr Qaddoura left for Baghdad today at the end of his three day visit to Jordan.

He had held several meetings with Jordanian officials to discuss means of promoting economic cooperation among Arab states. In a pre-departure statement he pointed out that Jordan was honouring all its commitments towards various economic agreements with Arab states.

## First Jordanian ambassador to China presents credentials

HONG KONG, Feb. 16 (R)—The first Jordanian Ambassador to China, Kamal Al Humoud, today presented his credentials to Chinese National People's Congress Vice-Chairman Ulanhu in Peking—almost two years after the two countries established diplomatic relations.

The New China News Agency.

monitored here, said Mr. Ulanhu expressed hopes of further developing the friendly relations with Jordan and also reiterated China's stand of supporting the "Just struggle of the Arab and Palestinian peoples."

China and Jordan established diplomatic relations in April, 1977.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### Photo Documentary Exhibit

The French Cultural Centre has a documentary exhibition on display about Georges Sand. Open during regular hours.

### Photo Exhibit

The Soviet Cultural Centre presents a photo display commemorating the sixty-first anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet armed forces.

### French Film

The French Cultural Centre presents a film by Yannik Bellon entitled "La femme de Jean" at 7:30 p.m. French version with Arabic subtitles.

## Advertise by mail In the Jordan Times

The Jordan Times can accept classified advertisements that are sent in by mail and accompanied by full payment in cash. Readers and advertisers who cannot conveniently bring their advertisements to the Jordan Times office or to an advertising agency office in Amman may send in their ads by mail on the following conditions:

1. Full payment in cash accompanies the advertisement.
2. The minimum charge for a single advertisement is JD 2.
3. Advertisements sent by mail cannot contain any artwork such as company emblems, photos or drawings, but must consist only of a headline and copy that will be typed by the Jordan Times.
4. Advertisements are not accepted over the telephone or telex, and guaranteed insertions on specific dates can only be assured by sending in the advertisements so they reach the Jordan Times office at least two days before the required day of publication.
5. For the minimum price of JD 3, the advertiser will have published an advertisement of three columns on two columns, which will have a maximum of 30 words, including the headline and telephone numbers to be called. The JD 3 charge is for one insertion; two insertions cost JD 6, three insertions cost JD 9, etc.
6. For a larger ad, the rates are JD 4 for 40 words and JD 5 for 50 words.
7. You can take advantage of the Jordan Times advertising by mail facility by completing the form below and mailing it with full payment in cash only to:

Advertising Department  
The Jordan Times  
P.O. Box 6710  
Amman, Jordan

Advertisers in Jordan must pay in Jordanian dinars; those in Syria may pay in Syrian currency at the going conversion rate.

(write one word only per box -- please print)


Please publish the above advertisement in the Jordan Times on \_\_\_\_\_ day (s). Enclosed is payment of \_\_\_\_\_.

Name:  
Address:  
Signature:

## The Arab Potash Co. JORDAN VALLEY AUTHORITY

## Village Development Project Stage II Invitation for Prequalification

The Jordan Valley Authority, an agency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, invites submission of prequalification data from U.S. contractors, joint contractors and contractors from countries under AID Geographic Code 941, or joint ventures, projects of similar nature and type for the construction of about 30,102 square metres of schools, clinics, municipal buildings distributed throughout the valley located along an 88 kilometre stretch of highway traverses the length of the East Bank of the River Valley. Temperature in the valley ranges between 7 and 48 degrees Centigrade. Buildings shall have monolithic reinforced concrete foundations, columns and roof with 20 centimetre hollow concrete walls. The project shall consist of the following: 23 schools ranging from approximately 1480 square metres or approximately 20,475 square metres in total classroom space; 13 school administration buildings of approximately 1131 square metres in total area; 13 school toilet facilities of approximately 676 square metres in total area; 4 health centres ranging from approximately 420 to 2250 square metres in total area; 3510 square metres in total space; municipal facilities with an approximate total of 4310 square metres. Aggregate, water, cement reinforcing steel are readily available.

Although it is not required that contractor the area, it might be to the advantage of contractors acquaint themselves with local conditions. Play specifications are available for review by interested contractors in Amman, Jordan. The JVA will accept qualifications of the contractors. The type of contract to be entered into will be stated in the bidding documents when issued to the prequalified contractors. The project, of which the above described buildings are a part, will be jointly financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Government of Jordan. The contractor to whom a contract is awarded will be paid in U.S. dollars and Jordanian dinars. In submitting pre-qualification data, all qualification questionnaire for construction contractors (Attachment 2A CH2, HB 11 TM 11-73) filled out completely and submitted together with brochures and additional information on the project and resources. In the event that a joint venture prequalification questionnaire is submitted, the forms are available from the JVA in Amman, Jordan and from AID Washington. Completed pre-qualification data must be submitted to:

The President, Jordan Valley Authority  
P.O. Box 2769, Amman, Jordan  
Telex: 1632 JVC JO; phone 41472

With a copy to:

Agency for International Development  
NE/PD Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20523  
Attn: Robert Fedel  
Phone 202/632-1839

Prequalification data must be postmarked on or before 28 February. A short list of qualified contractors will be advised by the end of March 1978, and when they will be invited to submit proposals. It is expected that the construction period will be about 12 months.

30 كذا في الجدول



# Damas-Scene

Compiled for the Jordan Times by Pat McDonnell

(Week of Feb. 17 - 23)  
**EXHIBITS**

**TUESDAY, Feb. 17:** Oil paintings by the Belgian artist Rudall Dan. This exhibition will open for one week at the Arab Cultural Centre. A 7 p.m. distribution will open the exhibition sponsored by the Ministry of Culture.

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 19:** A photographic commentary on the Soviet Navy Day will open for one week at the Soviet Cultural Centre.

**THURSDAY, Feb. 22:** A major exhibition featuring the works of Iraqi artists will go on view at Al Sha'b Gallery. The exhibition is among the list of participating painters, sculptors and the poets.

**FRIDAY, Feb. 23:** An exhibition of 35 oil paintings by Turki Mahd Bey is on view through Feb. 28 at the French Cultural Centre. A native of Deir Ez-Zor, Mr. Mahd Bey executes to intricate bedouins and abstracted Arabic calligraphy in a unique style.

**SATURDAY, Feb. 24:** Other painters in the ongoing exhibit are Remo Remotti, J. M. Moudarres and Mahmoud Daoud. The exhibition is among the list of participating painters, sculptors and the poets.

**SUNDAY, Feb. 25:** A major exhibition featuring the works of Iraqi artists will go on view at Al Sha'b Gallery. The exhibition is among the list of participating painters, sculptors and the poets.

## THEATRE

**TUESDAY, Feb. 17 and SUNDAY, Feb. 18:** Theatre "Kaze" of Japan will entertain children at 6 p.m. both evenings in the Al-Hamra Theatre. This company of 13 performs "Trunk Theodorus" using ropes, cloth and paper; and "Animeime", utilising balls and balls—all media children are accustomed to, but which are used to create a new form of theatre.

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 19:** The National Theatre of Syria is going into its production of "Man of La Mancha" as Don Quixote. Performances are nightly at 8 p.m. except Friday at Al Hamra Theatre. Tharab Dipey is the director of the musical-orchestration and singing have been prerecorded (in Arabic).

## LECTURES

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 18:** Prof. W. Al Baroudi will present an evening of lectures under sponsorship of the Arab Union of Writers at 6 p.m. at the Arab Cultural Centre (in Arabic).

**THURSDAY, Feb. 19:** "The Political and Journalistic Activity of the Arab Combatants of Independence in Germany during World War I" will be the topic of Prof. Werner Ende at 5 p.m. at the Al-Hamra Theatre No. 6, Damascus University. The German scholar's visit is co-sponsored by Damascus University and the West German Cultural Institute (in Arabic).

olar's visit is co-sponsored by Damascus University and the West German Cultural Institute (in Arabic).

**TUESDAY, Feb. 20:** A roundtable discussion on "Ways and Means to Prepare and Develop Teachers for the Classroom" will be the topic of Dr. Hartmut Schupps of the German Democratic Republic School at 6 p.m. at the GDR Cultural Centre (in Arabic).

**TUESDAY, Feb. 20:** Prof. Werner Ende of Hamburg University's Department for Arabic Language and Literature will talk on "Arabic Historiography in the 20th Century" at 5 p.m. at Damascus University Amphitheatre No. 6. His topic will be open to questions and discussions concerning the Umayyad Empire. Prof. Ende has studied Arabic, Islamic culture and history at the American University of Cairo (1963-64). Halle and Hamburg.

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21:** "In the World of Dancing" is the topic of a lecture by Riso Kanichvili at 6 p.m. at the Soviet Cultural Centre (in Arabic).

## VIDEO-TAPED PROGRAMMES

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21:** "Jean Rostand in a Certain Regard," Part I will be shown at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre (in French).

**FRIDAY, Feb. 23:** "Dossier-Souvenir with Edith Piaf" will be shown at 6:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre (in French).

## FILMS

**SATURDAY, Feb. 17 and MONDAY, Feb. 19:** "Sept Mois sur Ordinance," a film directed by Jacques Rouffio starring Michel Piccoli, Gerard Depardieu and Marina Vlady, will be shown at 7:30 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre (in French, Arabic subtitles).

**SUNDAY, Feb. 18:** Documentaries on camping, hunting, horse-breeding and horse-riding will be shown at 6 p.m. at the German Democratic Republic Cultural Centre (in German, Arabic subtitles).

**MONDAY, Feb. 19:** "Silent Minute" is slated for 6 p.m. at the Soviet Cultural Centre (in Russian, Arabic subtitles).

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21:** A documentary film entitled "The Government Troupe of Soviet Dancers" will be shown at 6 p.m. at the Soviet Cultural Centre (in Russian, Arabic subtitles).

**THURSDAY, Feb. 22:** "Tout L'Or du Monde," directed by Rene Clair and starring Bourvil, Philippe Noiret and Francoise Dorleac, will be shown at 7:30 p.m. at the French Cultural Centre (in French, Arabic subtitles).

**FRIDAY, Feb. 23:** "You Cannot Forget" is the title of a film scheduled for 6 p.m. at the Soviet Cultural Centre (in Russian).



Belgian songstress-comedienne Annie Duparc imitates Charlie Chaplin and sings in her own style nightly at the rooftop supper club of the Meridien Hotel.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Vivacious Belgian songstress Annie Duparc has started a three-week engagement in the rooftop supper club of the Meridien Hotel. The dynamic redhead is determined to spend the daylight hours touring the Old City of Damascus because it is here that her husband-to-be was born.

"You might say I'm engaged to marry a man of all nations," Ms. Duparc said. It seems her fiancé is an American citizen with a medical practice in Brussels, but he was born in Syria of Russian parentage.

Ms. Duparc's appearance at the Damascus Meridien will cap her career as an international entertainer. Soon as she returns to Belgium, she will wed her physician and limit her theatrical life to the Brussels stage. This is not Ms. Duparc's first appearance in Damascus; four years ago she starred in a French Festival of Songs at Cinema Sufara. She also performed in Aleppo during 1977.

Not only does she belt out romantic ballads in her own Duparc style, she is an excellent impersonator—her acts at the Meridien include take-offs on Charlie Chaplin, Barbara Streisand and Shirley Maclaine. Ms. Duparc also sits in with Ignazio Di Lietto's orchestra—she competently plays nine instruments—and excels on the saxophone, trumpet, guitar, drums and piano.

If you like feats of magic, you shouldn't miss Romanian magician Retas who is appearing nightly through Feb. 28 at the Meridien Hotel Disco. The internationally acclaimed magician is renowned for theatrical hypnotism, illusions, pseudo-spiritualism and telepathy as well as general manipulations of magic. His honors include Maitre Magicien de L.A.F.A.P., Ordre des Illusionistes, All Indian Magiciens Circle of Calcutta, Belgian Ring Club des Magiciens de Bruxelles and Cercle Francais D'Illusion.

## ELSEWHERE IN SYRIA

**WEDNESDAY, Feb. 21:** Prof. Werner Ende of Hamburg University will speak on "The Political and Journalistic Activity of Arab Combatants of Independence in Germany during World War I" at Aleppo University (in Arabic).

**THURSDAY, Feb. 22:** "Arabic Historiography in the 20th Century" will be the topic of Prof. Werner Ende at Aleppo University. Dr. Ende is a faculty member of Hamburg University's Department of Arabic Language and Literature. His visit to Syria is co-sponsored by Damascus University and the West German Cultural Institute (lecture in Arabic).

## PAT-POURRI

A gold ribbon for best party of the month goes to Jeri and Richard Rauh (he's first secretary of the U.S. embassy). More than 50 guests converged at the Rauh's sixth-floor apartment Wednesday night to meet a contingent from the Chinese embassy. Mr. Rauh has always been a culture vulture and he particularly admires Chinese art, Chinese food, Chinese traditions and the people. When the opportunity arose, he invited several of the Chinese he has officially met in Damascus to a get-together at his home. Best of all, he gave several of his American and Syrian friends the chance to meet his Chinese guests.

Mr. Rauh, who has taken extensive Chinese cooking lessons in Washington, D.C., did not attempt to serve oriental delicacies, but instead chose eight American courses including creamed corn and barbecued ribs—the latter two dishes won much praise from the Chinese women on hand. The Rauh residence is a mini-museum filled with exquisite rugs, china, paintings, bronzes and sculptures collected by the couple throughout the Arab World and the Far East over the past 15 years. Nevertheless, Liu Cheng-yen, first secretary of the People's Republic of China, politely said: "Sorry, Rick, but I think this platter is Japanese. Sorry, but this bowl isn't Han Dynasty, it looks more like Hong Kong 1962."

The Chinese Counsellor Huang Pu-chen and U.S. Ambassador Talcott Seelye soon struck up a conversation as did Mrs. Joan Seelye and the counsellor's English-speaking wife, Chou Wen-fan. Syria's first woman diplomat, Mauna Schich-Fadli, was observed chatting with Christa and David Newton, Deputy Chief Mission of the U.S. embassy; and Mrs. Newton's mother, Mrs. Rathe, of West Germany; Dr. and Mrs. Bourhan Abed; Farida Al-Saman; Wassila Soladi and her husband Fayed Shallah. The international motif was furthered by Pakistani guests, Capt. Mazhar Abbas and his lovely sari-clad wife, Zenobia. Mr. D. McCall of USAID actually exchanged comments with the Chinese in Chinese. A genuine bedouin invitation was extended by Samir Twaier to Chou Hain-hua and Mme. Wang Ssu Tu-shouan to visit his home city of Deir Ez-Zor. It was a warm, friendly evening and the Rauh's are to be congratulated for a truly international festivity.

If you have items for the Damas-Scene column, please mail them 10 days in advance to Pat McDonnell, P.O. Box 5601, Damascus, Syria.

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**TIME**  
The World Newsmagazine

ad in this week's issue....

stein centennial (the famed scientist still is relevant)

Jesinger in trouble? (U.S. energy chief says he is into will be state- g blamed)

oil in Iran (Bakhtiar resigns as army stays neutral)

trade (financial fall out from Western business)

**ENGLISH CLASSES - 1978/9**

**THIRD TERM**

British Council is starting classes for the 3rd on Monday, March 5th.

are interested in attending English classes e call at the British Council for full information. Registration and placement tests take from:

ay, Feb. 26th to Saturday, March 3rd

From: 9-12; 4-6.

**FOR SALE**

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**American Women of Amman**

**Newcomers ONLY**

A welcome coffee and orientation for women (first three months in Amman)  
Feb. 20th, 10 a.m.  
American Ambassador's residence  
Note: date changed from 19th to 20th  
Contact Elsie Huffard, tel. 24001

**WANTED**

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# Inflation brings worries to strong economies

By Colin Milham

Germany, with its bitter memories of the political consequences of inflation, sometimes seems more worried about the British and American economies than the British and Americans are themselves.

At the moment Europe and America's problems are purely economic, but for all the brave attempts to fight the disease in London and Washington, it is still as dangerous as ever and giving signs of growing worse.

Britain has already experienced a period of high inflation within recent years, and with the present industrial and economic problems may be heading for another dose, while the situation in the US, although not out of control, has rarely been as bad. With the exception of 1974, the present US inflation rate of nine per cent is the worst for 32 years.

Neither country has ever suffered from hyper-inflation, and a breakdown of democracy, followed by a dictatorship, and this may account for the fact that some of the measures introduced to control the problem have been too little and too late, particularly as far as America is concerned. The people of Britain seem more concerned about low pay, even though the cure for that may be worse than the illness.

One country which has known all the problems is Germany, which at present is ringed by countries with inflation problems. Massive inflation and economic ruin followed Germany's defeat in the First World War, bringing about the rise of Fascism, and leading to the Second World War.

The present West Germany has no such problems, having the

Germany and Switzerland, two of the world's strongest economies, are seriously concerned about inflation — in other countries.

strongest economy in Europe. While much of its population is too young to remember the inter-war period the elder statesmen of the Bundesbank probably do remember.

The Bundesbank is Germany's equivalent of the Bank of England, and it recently introduced measures designed to prevent inflationary pressures building up—proving that when your inflation rate is under three per cent, problems can still lie ahead.

This cautious attitude of the central bank is probably at variance with government thinking in Bonn at the moment, where any moves which may set back the economy are not welcomed, partly because they could lead to criticism from abroad.

The reason is that strong economies give rise to strong currencies, and the Deutschmark has risen very sharply against the dollar over the last year or so. Although this helps to keep down German inflation, the country's manufacturers have felt that their exports were meeting unfair competition, and this is a major reason behind the Bundesbank's intervention in the foreign exchange market to support the dollar.

The central banks in Japan, Switzerland and several other European countries have been in a similar position, and their total intervention was \$50 billion during 1978, of which Germany did \$24 billion and Switzerland \$13 billion.

This buying of dollars not only swells the foreign currency

reserves of the central bank, it also begins to leak out into the domestic banking system, increasing the liquidity of the commercial banks. Hence the worry about importing US inflation.

This surplus liquidity pushes down interest rates and encourages industrial expansion, but it also increases the domestic money supply alarmingly. Strong economic growth and a sharp rise in money supply is likely to lead to an unwelcome inflationary spiral.

Germany's money supply rose by 11.5 per cent last year, compared with an official target of eight per cent. In the last three months of 1978 it was growing at an annual rate of 14 per cent, and the Bundesbank has decided that something must be done. It has therefore raised one of its key borrowing rates, the Lombard Rate, to four per cent from 3.5 per cent, and increased the reserve requirements of the banks, thus taking money out of circulation.

These moves will not be without problems either, since higher interest rates may encourage the movement of more capital into Germany, and push up the value of the mark. Switzerland's problem looks even worse, with the basic money supply growing at an annual rate of 17 per cent last year, against a target of five per cent. The difference, however, is that compared with Germany Switzerland's economic performance is sluggish, and inflation is therefore less of a worry.

This has been illustrated in the

difference in emphasis between mans fearing inflation, even though the present level is only 2.4 per cent, while the Swiss, with an inflation rate even lower at 0.7 per cent, are more afraid of the consequences of too strong a currency.

In recent weeks German officials have tended to suggest that support for the dollar will have to be moderated, while the Swiss have eased some of their currency restrictions, as an indication that they feel the worst period of upward pressure on the Swiss franc has passed.

Elsewhere in Europe central banks are watching interest rates very closely. Before the move by Germany to increase rates, there were signs of an easing of conditions in various countries.

The measures introduced by the Bundesbank are unlikely to change anything in other countries in the short-term, but since all Common Market currencies except sterling are soon to be linked, any further easing of monetary conditions may prove short-lived.

Germany's inflation rate is much lower than most of its EEC partners, and if the linking of currencies through the European Monetary System is to succeed, then interest rates in Paris, Milan, Dublin, Brussels, and Amsterdam, will have to be much higher than in Frankfurt.

The only final answer is a reduction of everyone's inflation rate to somewhere nearer the German level, but that still looks some way off. The latest figures from Paris show French inflation at 9.7 per cent in 1978, compared with nine per cent a year earlier.

Financial Times  
News-Features

# Dancer to director

By Clement Crisp

At the end of 1978 Lynn Seymour took up an appointment as artistic director of the ballet at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. The news may have come as a shock to Miss Seymour's myriad admirers who foresaw a prospect of no more of those blazing performances which are the present joy of the Royal Ballet in Britain.

But an arrangement between Covent Garden and Munich has been announced allowing Seymour to continue dancing with the Royal Ballet as far as her new duties will permit. The Royal Ballet has, after all, been the cradle and the framework for her talent—a talent which has been hailed as one of the most inspiring in Britain's national ballet.

But this new development in Seymour's career comes at a crucial time. For anyone who, like me, has watched her from her first performances when, as a radiantly beautiful girl of 18, she made her mark in Kenneth MacMillan's "The Burrow" in 1958, there comes the sudden shock of realising that she is now in her late thirties.

All dancers—ballerinas most of all—are realists. They know that after 20 years performing at the very peak of their chosen calling, the body must inevitably start to fail, no matter how great their artistry.

It is a tragedy for dancers that as they grow older and their interpretative gifts increase and are enriched, their physical prowess, the brute tendons and muscles, start to decline. On occasions ballerinas have said to me as they enter their forties: "I've still got about five good years left, but after that..."

For them, for any great dance artist at this age, there comes the moment of assessing the future, of balancing gifts, genius and popular acclaim against the demands of their art on purely physical terms.

A few ballerinas, with care, may dance fruitfully into their fifties: Ulanova, Danilova, Markova, Plisetskaya continued to give valid performances at that age. Others continue longer still, and what the public then sees is a mere travesty of former greatness, as the artist loses all conscience about standards previously established.

For Lynn Seymour there has inevitably been an awareness that a dance career must end, and that something equally creative must replace it. Hence this move to Munich (a parallel with her contemporary, and great friend, Marcia Haydee who directs the Stuttgart Ballet and combines this with a continuing, splendid dance career). Hence, too, the fact that two years ago Seymour branched into choreography and, in her first workshop ballets demonstrated an ability to make dances of clear expressive merit.

Her first professional work was for the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet—it had long been a policy for this smaller section of the Royal Ballet to offer opportunities to young and debutant choreographers. Seymour's "Rashomon" showed that she was a choreographer of unquestioned ability.

Treating in vivid and erotic dance terms the theme of Kurosawa's celebrated film, "Rashomon" was an instant success. It was a work of clear personal style, illuminated also by the fact that Seymour had made a fine choice of collaborators in Pamela

Lynn Seymour, one of Britain's leading ballerinas for the past two decades, has already made her mark as a choreographer of note. Now her career takes another new turn with her appointment as artistic director at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich.

Marre, a young design student from the Slade School of Art, and Bob Downes, a musician who had made considerable study of Japanese flute music. The result was a gripping drama, emphasised by fine performances that Seymour stimulated from her cast.

There followed "The Court of Love", a work more interesting in idea than in achievement, for it suffered from an inconclusive ending. Then in the summer of 1978 Seymour created her most ambitious piece to date "Intimate Letters". It was a work in which she put elements from her own experience—she has been married twice and is the proud mother of twin sons aged 11 and younger son of four. The ballet is centred upon the figure of a woman who finds herself at a party confronted by four men who love her in different ways.

The score is Janacek's string quartet of the same title, in itself a work having a deep personal significance to the composer. Seymour turned to the distinguished novelist Gillian Freeman (scenarist of "Mayerling" for the Royal Ballet) to devise a stage action which she, in turn, explored in a manner more recitative than arioso.

In dense dramatic texture, and its emotional tension, reflected

aspects of Seymour's own genius as a ballerina. She has ever been a dancer in whose style meaning blazes through the dance. Her movement is lyrical, beautifully rounded, musical to its very core, and with a totally compelling emotional drive to it.

Her first created role, the girl in "The Burrow", was made for her by Kenneth MacMillan. Thereafter, she has been MacMillan's muse, the central figure in many of his ballets and the justification for his choreography. Her dancing, with its expressive fervour, has been celebrated in such superb works as "Romeo and Juliet" (she created the role of Juliet and MacMillan made it the motive force of the ballet), and "Anastasia" (in which her incarnation of the Romanov Grand Duchess and the tormented figure of Anna Anderson is danced acting without parallel in ballet today).

In 1961 MacMillan first showed something of her range as the young girl, the pitiful victim of rape, in "The Invitation". Today Seymour still dances the role with total conviction, but she also on occasion assumes the part of the wife, bringing to it a magnificent compassion. In "Manon" she rivals Makarova, who is the only ballerina able to match her dramatic power; and in MacMillan's

most recent "Mayerling" performance as Mary Vetsera has been called the most exciting and physically demanding dancing of our time.

Yet Seymour is also, and lyrical grace—a fact celebrated by Sir Frederick Ashton, who made for her the rôle of the "The Two Pigeons" in 1969 again paid tribute to her gifts in 1977 when he taught her the capricious and Natalya Petrova in "The Country".

In Ashton's brief essay Duncan—"Five Dances" in the "Manner of Duncan"—there is a similarity between Seymour's swoops and runs in draperies, and the genius we can see so clearly in Isadora. The identical exact—not precise in steps, but absolutely in spirit.

Many other choreographers have worked with Seymour, interpretations of the classic repertoire—Giselle and Odette/Odile—been treasured for their beauty. It is this wealth, hence, this truly creative Seymour, brings to her appointment.

She also brings—and is someone who has known 20 years—a taste and an integrity that are rare characters.

The history of Ballet owes everything to its Nineteen de Valois and Rambert—and Seymour's calibre. Much is for

## Bright future for Ruhr coal industry



ESSEN, West Germany — This coalminer from the Ruhr industrial region of West Germany has every reason for looking cheerful. It has been such a cold winter that power stations in West Germany have bought more domestic coal and East Germany too has bought extra Ruhr coal to fuel power stations and meet demand. Long-term prospects look good too. The International Energy Agency, Paris, says in its first survey of long-term demand that even if economic growth is slow, both industrialised and Third World countries will need to mine more coal by the end of the century to meet demand. W. Germany has Western Europe's largest domestic reserves but is expected to be a net importer by 1990. (DaD)

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Factual errors, flawed analysis,  
says former under secretary of state

# Ex-U.S. official slams Kissinger's remarks on Iran

LONDON, Feb. 16 (R)—George Ball, former U.S. under-secretary of state, in a letter published today strongly criticised former secretary of state Henry Kissinger and said his recent comments on Iran were filled with factual errors and flawed analysis. Mr. Ball, a top adviser to the late presidents Kennedy and Johnson during 1961-66, said that contrary to Mr. Kissinger's assertion, President Carter gave the Shah of Iran unqualified support to the end.

The letter attacking Mr. Kissinger was published in today's issue of the London weekly journal *The Economist* which last week carried a lengthy interview with the former secretary of state on Iran and other world issues.

Mr. Ball said that Mr. Kissinger bore heavy responsibility for former president Nixon's disastrous encouragement to the Shah to overload his country with inappropriate military hardware.

"This costly burden resulted not only in precipitating a financial squeeze that compelled cut-backs on construction, with resulting unemployment and disaffection, it also led the Shah to megalomania that cut him off from all contact with reality and the Iranian people," Mr. Ball declared.

He said that after May, 1972, not only did President Nixon's administration furnish covert help to the Shah against the Kurds, but Mr. Kissinger, then national security adviser, issued one of the most remarkable documents in American history. He directed that the Shah be allowed to buy any and every kind of the most advanced U.S. military hardware.

Mr. Ball also said, "It is nonsense for Mr. Kissinger to say that the Shah 'certainly had the means at his disposal to resist more strenuously than he did' during the Iranian revolution, and he chose not to exercise them because he must have had doubts about the United States' real intentions."

"The reason the Shah did not stand and fight was that his whole

country was solidly against him and his army was beginning to disintegrate under the pressure of competing loyalties—as has now occurred. It is fatuous to think that we could have kept a hated absolute monarch in power by encouraging the repressive use of military force. This was, after all, an internal revolt. What would Mr. Kissinger have done? Sent the Sixth Fleet steaming up the Gulf?" Mr. Ball asked.

He added that he could only believe that Mr. Kissinger was laying down a protective smokescreen when he sought to put the blame on too rapid modernisation, on American efforts to persuade the Shah to liberalise, or on President Carter's human rights policy. "I am sure he knows better than that," Mr. Ball concluded.



## Solingen: Products in steel from old to new

There is hardly another town in West Germany whose name is so closely associated with objects of everyday use as Solingen. Wherever knives and scissors are sold, you will find products made in Solingen. Solingen is also the home of the German Sword Museum. It houses over 4,000 of the knives, swords, scissors and items of cutlery that have made Solingen world renowned for the past four hundred years. The museum's collection of weapons is unique, ranging from the executioner's sword to the sabre of a modern field marshal. Museum director Dr. Haedeke checks the most valuable weapons once a year and has rust removed. (DaD photo)

## Belgian troops to Zaire said linked to discovery of plot to oust Mobutu

BRUSSELS, Feb. 16 (R)—Belgium's decision to send 250 paratroops to Zaire was partly based on discovery of a plot to overthrow President Mobutu Sese Seko, well informed Belgian Government sources said today.

They said that the Belgian Government learned at the end of January of a plan to attack the country by Zairean opposition groups based in Europe. They planned a pincer movement from the east and from lower Zaire, the sources said.

The paratroops—the last are due to go on Monday—are officially helping to train Zaire forces under an agreement between the two countries signed last year.

The sources said the information came at the same time as messages speaking of growing misery and economic collapse in Zaire.

The Belgian Government also heard about the recruitment of Belgian mercenaries for the plot but did intervene while it tried to find out in detail who was behind it.

Zaire said yesterday that a force of mercenaries, including Belgians, had gathered in neighbourhoods.

ing Rwanda ready to attack the eastern Zaire province of Kivu.

Diplomatic sources in Kinshasa, the capital, said Zairean paratroops last week patrolled streets in Bukavu and Goma—two key towns in Kivu province—and set up road blocks.

The sources in Brussels said about 15 Belgian mercenaries left here last Saturday carrying cameras and apparently posing as

businessmen intending to survey Rwanda for tourism possibilities.

The sources said Belgium was still concerned about the effect on Europeans of possible unrest caused by the deteriorating economic situation.

They said trouble could happen at any time because of the vast numbers of unemployed who are dissatisfied with General Mobutu's rule.

## Swiss referendum may shape nation's nuclear energy plans

BERNE, Feb. 16 (R)—Switzerland's 3.8 million voters decide by referendum this weekend whether to impose strict new controls on nuclear energy development. If the controls are approved in the voting, which begins tonight and ends on Sunday, communities will be given the right to veto the building of nuclear power stations in their areas.

A passionate public debate leading up to the nuclear vote has pitted the federal parliament, regional power authorities and private nuclear power industry against a well-organized environmental lobby.

Opponents of the controls say that if approved, they would virtually prevent any future atomic power stations from being built and that this would spell doom to Switzerland's future prosperity.

If the controls are approved three nuclear power stations already operating will have to be approved retroactively by parliament and five others in various stages of construction will come under intense democratic scrutiny.

## Italy's government crisis may lead to early general elections

ROME, Feb. 16 (R)—Early general election looked the most likely outcome of Italy's two-week-old government crisis today following renewed consultations between political parties.

Acting Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who heads the present caretaker government, met Communist leader Enrico Berlinguer yesterday with revised proposals for a parliamentary pact.

But Mr. Berlinguer, whose party has demanded cabinet seats in any new Christian Democratic administration, turned the tables on the veteran premier with his own proposal—for a government

excluding Mr. Andreotti's party.

As an alternative he suggested a figure from one of the minor parties could try to form a multi-party coalition. He said Mr. Andreotti's proposals, which he did not disclose would not resolve the crisis.

The Christian Democrats have ruled Italy for over 30 years, but lacking a majority have been forced to rely on a variety of coalitions or working agreements to stay in power.

A Christian Democratic spokesman last night described the Communist proposals as "tough and provocative." He said Mr. Berlinguer was effectively inviting elections, which all the

major parties have said they want to avoid.

Mr. Andreotti, caretaker premier since Communist withdrawal of support forced his government to resign on Jan. 31, last night also talked with Socialist leader Bettino Craxi.

Mr. Craxi said Mr. Andreotti's proposals contained useful elements towards an agreement. He said they created "a new and completely different situation" which he would have to refer to his party.

So far the third-placed socialists have said they will not enter any new agreement with the Christian Democrats that does not include communist participation.

## World News Briefs

41 killed by mystery explosion in Warsaw

WARSAW, Feb. 15 (R)—The toll from a mystery explosion that wrecked a central Warsaw savings bank yesterday has risen to 41 dead and 110 injured, the Polish News Agency PAP reported today. Seventy-seven people were still in hospital, the agency said. The explosion, given by PAP last night was 32 dead and 78 injured. Eye-witnesses estimated about 400 people were in the circular, two-story glass and metal building at the time of the blast just after midday. Buildings were damaged in the explosion, which has not been officially explained. The Warsaw newspaper *Zycie Warszawy* reported today that more than a thousand people had donated blood in response to public appeals. Theatres, cinemas and other places of entertainment in Warsaw were remaining closed today as a token mourning for the victims, PAP said.

Iran to maintain trade links with Japan

TOKYO, Feb. 16 (R)—Iran has assured the Tokyo government it will maintain friendly trade and economic links with Japan, a spokesman said today. The spokesman said today that after a cabinet meeting that the assurance was given in Tehran to Japanese Ambassador Chikara Wada. He quoted Japanese Foreign Minister Sunao Sonoda as telling the cabinet that Dr. Banihashri also hoped Iran would resume its part in the construction of a billion petrochemical plant in Bandar Shahpur.

Turkey: Gunmen kill 4 in coffee-house raid

ANKARA, Feb. 16 (R)—Four people were killed when gunmen opened fire on a coffee-house in Turkey's southern city of Adana last night, police said today. Two people were seriously wounded, said. Witnesses said two gunmen arrived on motorcycles and opened fire on the coffee-house, known to be frequented by leftists. Adana is the capital of one of the 13 Turkish provinces which were put under martial law in December because of political unrest.

Court allows natural death for boy in coma

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 16 (R)—A judge yesterday ordered the parents of a three-year-old boy should be allowed to turn off a respirator which is keeping his son alive. The boy, who was resuscitated only as Benjamin, has been in a coma since being involved in a car accident last year. Judge Matt Byrne said medical tests showed that Benjamin had irreversible brain damage. That means the father can order doctors to disconnect the boy today.

Tokyo to host seminar on tanker safety

TOKYO, Feb. 16 (R)—About 25 Asian and Middle Eastern nations will take part in a five-day seminar on tanker safety and oil prevention in Tokyo from next Monday, the Transport Ministry said today. The meeting is sponsored by Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organisation.

Cancer researchers may have found acne cure

BOSTON, Massachusetts, Feb. 16 (R)—A group of cancer researchers say they have stumbled upon what may be the long-sought cure for acne. The discovery was reported yesterday's edition of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The man team from the National Cancer Institute in Maryland, they developed the substance as a potential cancer treatment but tried it for acne because it was similar to existing acne drugs. They treated 24 acne sufferers with the new drug, which was orally, and 23 recovered completely while the other showed considerable improvement. According to a government survey, 10 million Americans suffer from acne, and existing treatments are partially effective.

U.K. rock group wins 4 Grammy awards

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 16 (R)—Britain's Bee Gees pop group won four of the U.S. recording industry's Grammy awards here last night. The album of the year prize for "Saturday Night Fever" by Billy Joel won the record of the year and songwriter of the awards for his "Just the way you are." Record critics said the album showed the record-buying public was turning its back on hard rock and switching back to romantic songs with strong melodies. From the prize for album of the year, the Bee Gees also won Grammy awards for the best arrangement for voices ("I've got a feeling"), for best vocal by a group ("Saturday night fever"), a record producer of the year. Anne Murray from Canada took Grammy for the best female pop vocalist for "You needed me." Barry Manilow won the male award for his driving record with band background, "Copacabana." The singing group "A Tribe Called Quest," whose big hit was "Boogie oogie oogie," won the award for the best new artist of the year.

## Patient is home after 3rd heart transplant

PHILADELPHIA, (AP)—Dr. Jerry Young, the only person in history to have three heart transplants, came home on Valentine's Day, with a heart pinned to his sweater and his sense of humor intact.

After greeting his family, Mr. Young opened his jacket to expose a small heart bearing the words: "My heart beats for you." He turned a crank on the back of the heart and it began to buzz and jump. "That's exactly how I feel," he said, laughing.

Mr. Young, a 43-year-old Cherry Hill, New Jersey podiatrist, underwent his first heart transplant at Stanford University in May 1976, seven months after suffering a massive heart attack. His body began to reject the heart in the summer of 1977 and his health declined. Last September, he returned to Stanford for a second

heart transplant. The last pumped properly, but surgeons were forced to remove it and put in another heart. Despite problems with rejection, pneumonia and dehydration, Young grew stronger. On Feb. 14, he was moved into an apartment from the medical center. Young pedaled a recumbent bike twice a week to keep his circulation up. His examination continued improvements. Doctors gave him the go-ahead to leave the hospital on Feb. 14. He showed no sign of rejection.

So 131 days after his heart transplant, Mr. Young arrived at the Philadelphia International Airport. "I'm home," Mr. Young embraced his family. "It's home."

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By Daniel Nelson

## Carving up Antarctica

Antarctica is important for science because its unspoiled nature presents ideal research conditions. But it has other functions: its ecological processes affect the world's long-term weather pattern; the ice sheets provide a record of geological and climatic history stretching back tens of thousands of years; it contains most of the world's fresh water (thus the interest in towing icebergs to Australia and the Middle East); it may contain vast mineral wealth; and the fish and crustaceans which inhabit its waters could go far towards solving the world food supply problem.

It is the last two factors which have turned what was no more than a passing interest in Antarctica by the world at large into a race against time. For the lure of cashing in on the development of potentially extensive new energy supplies and a previously unrecognised store of food protein is worrying those who wish to ensure that the "white continent's" tightly-balanced ecosystem is not disturbed by exploitation.

So far the record of responsibility is mixed. Development of Antarctica has been slow since Captain Cook sailed round it in 1772-75. Conflicting claims to the area have resulted in few hostilities beyond the occasional tearing down of flags and demolition of huts. International cooperation in scientific research there was so successful during International Geophysical Year (1957-58) that the participating countries signed a treaty recognising that "it is in

the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes."

But even with the limited attention that Antarctica has received, large-scale hunting has decimated the seal and whale populations. Non-militarisation of the area was brought about not by idealism but by fear that it might be used for missile launchings. Overall, the restraint exercised in exploitation owes more to climatic inhospitability than to environmental concern.

This would not matter if we were still in the days when British explorer Ernest Shackleton placed a newspaper advertisement saying "Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success."

But technology is overcoming the constraints, which gives urgency to the debate on who controls the continent. Since the establishment of the Antarctic Treaty, the signatories—Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Britain,

the United States, the Soviet Union, and Poland—have tried to keep the continent to themselves.

The problem is that they disagree over who has a right to what. There are conflicting territorial claims. Those of Chile, Argentina and Britain overlap, for instance. The Argentine cabinet once met on ice as a symbolic reinforcement of its claim. Some treaty powers, including the United States and Russia, do not even recognise the principle of sovereignty in the area. The 1959 treaty glosses over the territorial issue, effectively freezing it until the expiry of the agreement.

Now pressures are increasing for other countries to be given access to Antarctica's resources. This movement has been encouraged by the concept pushed forward by the Law of the Sea negotiations that deep sea-bed minerals are the common heritage of mankind.

Because of this confusion, the treaty fails to provide a workable basis for exploitation. The treaty powers have been trying to formulate a "living resources" agreement. The goal of having it signed by the end of 1978 came unstuck at a meeting in Buenos Aires in July, not surprisingly over

The 13 countries who signed the Antarctic Treaty would like to keep it to themselves. But the more closely scientists examine it, the richer Antarctica looks, and if extensive mineral deposits there are confirmed the cold continent could generate very heated arguments.

the jurisdictional aspects.

A new draft agreement has been worked out and will probably be discussed at an informal meeting of treaty powers in Geneva next March. This gathering is expected to pave the way for a definitive conference in June, in Australia. The treaty powers are negotiating with one eye over their shoulder on the mineral resources: agreement on fish would make it easier to formulate a pact covering oil and gas. They hope that the differences among members of the exclusive Antarctic club will be papered over sufficiently to keep out third countries.

Of the "living resources", the most lucrative are krill, shrimp-like creatures which swim in vast shoals up to half an acre wide and which contain around 15 per cent protein by wet weight, roughly the same as beefsteak.

Japan and the Soviet Union fish krill systematically and market them as pate, cheese spread and shrimp substitute. West Germany has its eye on them for animal feed

and Chile turns them into "fish fingers".

About 120,000 metric tonnes a year is currently harvested and one estimate is that the haul could be increased to 50 million tonnes, which compares with a total world fish catch at present of 70 million tonnes.

There are, however, technical problems of exploitation. Krill have only a four hour life before they must be frozen. Compared with 24 hours for fish. And the biological features that enable krill to survive in icy waters also give them strong resistance to freezing. Even more important, not enough is known about their breeding, or their role in the ecological chain, to make large-scale harvesting safe.

Scientists fear that indiscriminate fishing of this potentially valuable resource could jeopardise the survival of the area's other limited forms of life such as penguins and whales.

The krill debate brings in all the Antarctic issues: treaty countries which want to keep the benefits of

krill fishing to themselves; other signatories which insist on open access for all nations but which say the management of marine resources should be retained by the treaty powers on a "trusteeship" basis; outside countries

which feel the benefits of such living resources should not be reaped merely by a self-perpetuating clique of nations; scientists who oppose fishing in case it upsets the balance of the area.

Mineral exploitation is an even greater potential source of conflict. Widely conflicting estimates of oil and gas reserves have been made. There is speculation about the existence of uranium. East Antarctica contains what might be the world's largest coalfield. Iron ore certainly exists in Antarctica and there is circumstantial geological evidence for the likelihood of other minerals including platinum, chromium and vanadium.

At least one constructive step has been taken. At the ninth consultative meeting of the treaty powers in London in October, it was agreed that exploration and exploitation of mineral resources would be discouraged until a joint approach had been worked out.

There is also a vague but useful commitment that the interests of the international community will not be jeopardised. The danger is that if extensive mineral deposits are confirmed, such tenuous pledges will be swept aside.

Financial Times  
News-Features

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